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XVII.—Comparative View of the various Standards commonly used to express Vertical Distances. By Miss Colthurst. Communicated by G. Bellas Greenough, Esq.

[Read Nov. 26, 1849.]

THE object of the accompanying table is to supply geographical students with a standard by which they may compare the notations of vertical distances contained in foreign works.

At present the barometrical observations of learned foreigners are frequently expressed in French metres, in pieds du Rhin, in pieds de Berlin, in Paris feet, palmas, varas, &c. &c., rendering it necessary to enter into long calculations before comparative results can be obtained.

It is hoped that the present table will obviate this difficulty.

The standard selected has been the geographical mile taken at the equator, this being a fixed quantity universally known and dependent upon the figure of the earth itself. By taking 5 of these miles and dividing each into 100 parts or degrees, a scale is formed consisting of 500 degrees, each of which is equal to 60^{3}_{4} English feet.

By this arrangement the student of every nation will find no difficulty in at once referring unfamiliar measures not only to one philosophical term, but to the standard to which he is himself best accustomed. If, for instance, it be stated that an observed elevation is equal to 11,956 pieds de Berlin, a glance at the scale will show that this is equal to 200 degrees, or 2 geographical miles; and carrying the eye along the line, a ready comparison may be instituted with any other standard measure desired.

The author is indebted to a paper by M. de Jomard* for the first suggestion of the utility of such a scale, and should the annexed table meet with a favourable notice among geographers, it is in contemplation to publish a work embodying the principal observed elevations upon the surface of the globe, and referring each to its corresponding value upon the geographical scale.

^{*} Bulletin de la Société de Géographie, Deuxième Série, tom. iii.

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Comparative Views

the various Standards commonly used by Geographers to express vertical Distances S

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